(a) the details of wetlands and the ecological values they possess and the details of areas which fall under the category of wetlands;

(b) whether Government is considering to notify provisions on wetlands in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is also considering to undertake bio-diversity mapping of the wetlands in the country and if so, the details of conservation measures undertaken by Government for the wetlands from 2000 to 2009; and

(d) the details of 40 major wetlands in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Ministry of Environment and Forests operationalized the National Wetland Conservation Programme in 1987 under which 115 wetlands in 26 States/Union Territories have been identified so far for their conservation and wise use. 100% financial assistance is provided to the States/Union Territories to undertake various conservation activities. Wetlands perform various vital functions including providing food, fodder, fuel and water for domestic, irrigation and industrial purposes, habitat for fisheries and rare and endangered species of flora and fauna, maintaining natural biodiversity, helping in regulating hydrological regimes, flood control and recharging of aquifers.

All the areas which are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic eco-systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water fall under the category of wetlands.

(b) As envisaged in the National Environment Policy, 2006 a legally enforceable regulatory mechanism to ensure conservation and wise use of wetlands has been prepared.

(c) Inventorization and mapping is a continuous process. A project on 'National Wetland Information System and Updation of Wetland Inventory' is under implementation which includes biodiversity mapping.

(d) Under the National Wetland Conservation Programme, Kolleru lake is the only wetland identified from Andhra Pradesh. An amount of Rs. 123.309 lakhs has been released so far for undertaking various conservation activities in this wetland. Another 45 wetlands have been listed under a UNDP project implemented by Saiim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Coimbatore. However these wetlands are not part of the National Wetland Conservation Programme.

Panna National Park

904. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the census figures of tigers since 1995 in Panna National Park/Sanctuary; whether tigers in the Reserve have become extinct;

(b) the reasons for disappearance of tigers from Panna; whether killing of tigers took place by way of inducements by Government enforcement agencies and non-governmental organizations to poachers and smugglers for luring them into a trap in Panna, which led to disappearance of tigers;

(c) the details of administrative action taken against senior officials in charge of Panna forests; and

(d) whether senior forest officials of Panna reported about disappearance of tigers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Details of tiger estimation relating to the Panna Tiger Reserve since 1995, as reported by the State in the All India tiger estimation using the old pugmark method, are given in the statement (*See* below). The findings of the All India tiger estimation (2008) using the refined methodology as approved by the Tiger Task Force indicate that the Panna Tiger Reserve and its surround sustained 24 (±1 standard error range 15-32) tigers. This new methodology is based on spatial occupancy of tigers and sampling such forests using camera traps in a statistical framework, which is not comparable to the earlier total count using pugmarks. Tigers have become locally extinct in Panna largely due to poaching as pointed out in the report of the Special Investigating Team constituted for ascertaining the causative factors for disappearance of tigers from the Panna Tiger Reserve. At present, the reserve has only two translocated tigresses. There are no reports of inducements by Government enforcement agencies / non-governmental organizations for luring poachers/smugglers for trapping tigers, leading to their disappearance.

(c) and (d) The disappearance of tigers from Panna was confirmed through an assessment done by the Wildlife Institute of India. The State Government has been advised to fix responsibility on erring officials as pointed out in the report of the Special Investigating Team, constituted for ascertaining the causative factors for disappearance of tigers from the Panna Tiger Reserve, for disciplinary action.

Statement

Population of tigers in the Panna Tiger Reserve as reported by the State in the All India Tiger Estimation using the old methodology

S.No.	Name of Reserve	1972	1979	1984	1989	1993	1995	1997	2001-2002
1.	Panna (Madhya Pradesh)	-	-	-	-	25	22	22	31

Control on Poaching of Wildlife

905. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether state-of-the-art techniques are being utilized to effectively control the poaching of wildlife;